

Archaeological evaluation of land north of Pixham Ferry Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire



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Worcestershire Archaeology
Archive and Archaeology Service
The Hive, Sawmill Walk,
The Butts, Worcester
WR1 3PD

Status:
Date: 9 June 2017
Author: Peter Lovett plovett@worcestershire.gov.uk
Contributors: C Jane Evans and Elizabeth Pearson
Illustrator: Carolyn Hunt
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Archaeological evaluation of land north of Pixham Ferry Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire

Peter Lovett

With contributions by C Jane Evans and Elizabeth Pearson

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of land north of Pixham Ferry Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8499 4836). It was undertaken on behalf of Wardell Armstrong Archaeology, whose client Taylor Wimpey West Midlands intends to construct a new housing development for which a planning application will be submitted to Malvern Hills District Council.

Seventeen trenches were excavated across the site. A number of probable storage pits were identified, and a sample of them excavated. Whilst the pottery recovered from the features was of later Iron Age or Roman date, the proximity of a probable prehistoric enclosure some 200m to the west would suggest the former date.

The investigation also revealed a number of undated ditches. One of these is likely to relate to medieval or later land divisions; although one that predates the mid-19th century. The other ditches are likely to be older; possibly contemporary with the storage pits. An undated but probably early prehistoric possible hearth was also excavated. This lay in isolation from the other archaeological features identified.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of land north of Pixham Ferry Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8499 4836). It was commissioned by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA), whose client Taylor Wimpey West Midlands intends to construct a new housing development for which a planning application will be submitted to Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC).

The proposed development site is considered to include potential heritage assets, the significance of which may be affected by the application.

The project conforms to the generality of briefs prepared by Worcestershire County Council (WCC), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared in consultation with Adrian Scruby, Historic Environment Advisor for WCC on behalf of MHDC (WAA 2016a).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a), and *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

2 Aims

The general aims of the evaluation are to:

- determine the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains within the proposed development site;
- determine the character, date, extent and distribution of any archaeological deposits and their potential significance;
- determine levels of disturbance to any archaeological deposits from plough damage or from any other agricultural/industrial practices or later building activities;
- investigate and record all deposits and features of archaeological interest revealed to help characterise the archaeology to be disturbed by the current development;
- determine the likely impact on archaeological deposits from the proposed development;
- disseminate the results of the fieldwork through an appropriate level of reporting.

The specific aims are:

- to investigate anomalies revealed during the previous geophysical survey to access their origin, character and date;
- to aid the Client and Local Planning Authority Archaeologist the information to allow them to produce the best mitigation required to ensure that the archaeology present is either saved in-situ or suitably recorded ahead of the proposed development.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was led by Peter Lovett (BSc (hons.)) who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2012 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004, assisted by Nina O'Hare (BA (hons.)) and Morgan Murphy (BA (hons.); MA). The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan (BA (hons.); MA; ACIfA). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA). Elizabeth Pearson (MSc; ACIfA) contributed the environmental report. C Jane Evans (BA, MA, MCIfA) contributed the finds report.

3.2 Documentary research

An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was undertaken by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA 2016b).

3.3 List of sources consulted

Cartographic sources

- 1840 Tithe Award Plan of Kempsey
- 1st edition Ordnance Survey map 1895

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA 2016a).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 2 and 8 May 2017. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological "events", and the site code used in the archive is WSM 68015.

Seventeen trenches, amounting to just over 1,485m² in area, were excavated over the site area of 3.7ha, representing a sample of 4%. The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2. A geophysical survey was carried out over the southern half of the site, the northern half being under crops at the time of the works and thus unable to be surveyed (WAA 2016c). No specific archaeological features could be discerned from the results of this work, so the trench locations were arrayed in a rough grid, to allow for as wide coverage as possible across the site. During the evaluation, several trenches had to be relocated due to overhead cables and the proximity to existing hedges. Trenches 1, 3, 11, and 14 were moved away from hedge lines; Trench 2 was moved slightly north to keep the site access clear; Trenches 8 and 9 were moved due to overhead cables and Trench 9 was shortened to 34m.

A second parcel of land was originally intended to be investigated, with a c 6m wide trench running roughly north-west to south-east in the field on the western side of Old Road South. This was to enable the construction of a sewer pipe in advance of the housing development. It would have impacted upon a known enclosure site of probable prehistoric date (WSM 02109), but this stage of works remains pending. This stage of the project will now be conducted at a later date, and is not reported on here.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material and environmental samples, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). On completion of excavation, trenches were reinstated by replacing the excavated material.

3.5 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

3.6 Artefact methodology, by C Jane Evans

The finds work reported here conforms with the following guidance: for finds work by ClfA (2014b), for archive creation by AAF (2011) and for museum deposition by SMA (1993).

3.6.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012; appendix 2).

3.6.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. Where possible they were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* date was produced for each stratified context. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on a *pro forma* Access database.

No artefacts from environmental samples were examined.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.7 Environmental archaeology methodology, by Elizabeth Pearson

3.7.1 Project parameters

The environmental project conforms to relevant sections of the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a); *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011), and *Environmental archaeology and archaeological evaluations* (AEA 1995).

3.7.2 Sampling policy

Samples were taken according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (2012). A total of three samples (each of 10 litres) were taken from an Iron Age pit, and an undated linear and possible hearth (Table 4).

context	sample	feature type	fill of	period	sample volume (L)	volume processed (L)	residue assessed	flot assessed
305	1	pit	306	Iron Age	10	10	Yes	Yes
1205	2	linear	1206	undated	10	10	Yes	Yes
803	3	hearth	804	undated	10	10	Yes	Yes

Table 4: List of bulk samples

3.7.3 Processing and analysis

The samples were processed by flotation using a Siraf tank. The flots were collected on a 300µm sieve and the residue retained on a 1mm mesh. This allows for the recovery of items such as small animal bones, molluscs and seeds.

The residues were fully sorted by eye and the abundance of each category of environmental remains estimated. A magnet was also used to test for the presence of hammscale. The flots were scanned using a low power MEIJI stereo light microscope and plant remains identified using modern reference collections maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology, and a seed identification manual (Cappers *et al* 2012). Nomenclature for the plant remains follows the *New Flora of the British Isles*, 3rd edition (Stace 2010).

Animal bone was identified with the aid of modern bone reference collections housed at WA and identification guides (Schmid 1972 and Hillson 1992).

3.7.4 Discard policy

Remaining sample material and scanned residues will be discarded after a period of three months following submission of this report unless there is a specific request to retain them.

3.8 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

4 The application site

4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context

The study site is located to the south-west of the village of Kempsey. It is bordered on the north and east by a housing estate, on the south by Pixham Ferry Lane, and on the west by Old Road South. The ground is relatively flat, and lies at roughly c 17m AOD.

The geology of the site consists of superficial deposits of Worcester Member Sand and Gravel, overlying Sidmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 2017).

The archaeological context has been previously discussed in detail in both the DBA (WAA 2016b and the WSI (WAA 2016a). Of particular note are the two probable prehistoric enclosures known through both cropmarks and geophysical survey, which lie in the field immediately to the west. The first is a double-ditched enclosure (WSM 02109) c 42m west of the western edge of the present site. The second, simpler enclosure (WSM 02111) lies c 230m north-west of the western edge of the site.

Historic mapping has shown that the site had been agricultural land since at least 1840, when it was divided into four parcels of land. It remained with such divisions until 1970, when only the north-west division remained, with the rest of the land as one field, as it is today.

4.2 Current land-use

The site has been under crops, though is laid fallow currently, with the exception of the north-west parcel, which has a crop in it.

5 Results

5.1 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figure 2. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

Archaeological remains were identified in Trenches 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, and 16.

Trenches 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, and 17 were blank.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The natural stratum consisted predominantly of a soft yellow orange sand, with occasional striations of a firm pink clay with pebbles. It was observed at an average of c 0.65m below ground surface, in a range of between 0.53m and 0.87m.

A subsoil of between 0.20m to 0.38m in depth lay across the site, consisting of a soft yellowish brown silty sand.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Iron Age deposits

Ten pits were identified in Trench 3, of which three were sampled by excavation (Plate 2). Pit 304 emerged from the western edge of the trench, with approximately half of the feature visible in plan (Figs 3-4; Plate 3). It was circular, with steep sides and a flat base, measuring 0.25m deep by 0.93m wide by 2.15m long. It contained three fills; a main fill of a soft mid brown silty sand containing pottery sherds, and two slumping deposits around the edges, indicative of edge collapse. There was no indication of specific function from the material within the fills.

Pit 306 was similarly half revealed from the section, and appeared circular in plan (if extrapolated) (Fig 3; Plates 4 and 5). It contained a single fill of soft yellow brown silty sand and measured 0.44m

deep by 1.24m wide by 2.84m long, containing Iron Age pottery, and some charcoal flecks. The sides were not as steep as that in pit 304, being a concave edge. The southern side appeared to have suffered from erosion, creating an irregular edge.

The final pit excavated in this trench was 310, a sub-circular feature measuring 0.28m deep by 1m wide by 1.56m long. It had steep sides and a flat base, with a fill of soft orange brown silty sand, containing moderate fire-cracked stone.

The remaining unexcavated pits were all circular or sub-circular in plan, and ranged in size from 1.5m to 2.3m in diameter.

A large pit, 504, with steep sides and a flat base was excavated in Trench 5, and whilst it did not contain any dateable material, was morphologically similar to those in Trench 3 and therefore likely to be contemporary (Fig s 3-4; Plate 6). It measured 0.24m deep and had a diameter of 1.4m.

Two other pits were excavated in Trench 5 (Fig 3; Plate 8), differing to those discussed above in shape, being more elongated. Neither feature was fully revealed within the trench. Pit 506 measured 0.5m deep by 0.86m wide by 0.56m long, and was filled by a soft orange brown sand (Plate 7). Feature 508 was probably a pit, though its elongated shape may suggest that it was a linear feature that terminated within the trench. It measured 0.3m by 0.74m wide by 1.3m long, and had moderate to steep sides with a sloping base.

A small circular pit in Trench 13, 1306, had steep sides and was 0.25m deep by 0.75m wide by 0.9m long (Plate 9). No finds were recovered and it is dated by association to the other pits.

A possible gully terminus, 1304, was aligned north-west to south-east, and measured 0.19m deep by 1.28m wide. It was filled by a sterile soft yellow brown silty sand (Plate 10).

Three pits of probable Iron Age date were identified in Trench 16, of which two were excavated (Fig 3). All were suggestive of being storage pits. Circular pit 1604 was 0.24m deep by 0.8m wide by 1.24m long, and was filled by a sterile soft reddish brown silty sand (Plate 11). Pit 1606 was oval in shape, and was filled similarly to pit 1604. It measured 0.38m in depth, 0.58m wide and 1.5m long.

5.1.3 Phase 4: undated deposits

Five ditches were identified and excavated. Three of these, 320, 510, and 1206, seemed to represent one ditch, east to west across the site. In the excavated section in Trench 5, it appeared to cut the subsoil, suggesting that it is medieval or post-medieval in date. However, it does not align to any of the known field boundaries from the historic mapping, though these are only known from 1840 onwards. Ditch 510 measured at least 0.2m in depth and 0.52m in width, filled by a mid orange brown silty sand.

The two remaining ditches did not match up with any other linear features. 1208 ran roughly parallel to ditch 1206. Ditch 604 ran north-west to south-east and measured 0.21m by 1.2m wide (Plate 13).

Two oval pits were excavated, one in Trench 8, and one in Trench 12. Pit 1204 (Plate 14) was 0.31m deep, 0.42m wide and 0.72m long, whilst pit 704 was 0.16m deep, 0.52m wide and 1.2m long. Both were filled with sterile sands and neither contained any material to suggest a date or function. A third pit (1308) excavated in Trench 13 was irregular in shape, and may have been the result of tree rooting.

A posthole (104; Plate 15) was excavated in Trench 1. It was small, at 0.16m deep, 0.24m wide and 0.34m long, and had steep sides into a concave base. There were no finds, or evidence of a post pipe or packing, and it lay in isolation.

A shallow scoop feature was excavated in Trench 8. At first, due to some scorching seen at the top of the deposit, it was considered to be a potential hearth (804) (Plate 16). Upon excavation, little real form could be discerned, and it is likely to have been a shallow depression filled with subsoil, upon which some burning event had occurred. It measured just 0.08m deep, 0.6m wide and 1.4m long.

5.1.4 5: modern deposits

A thick topsoil of between 0.29m to 0.50m in depth lay across the site, consisting of reddish brown silty sand.

A deposit containing articulated cattle bones was discovered in Trench 6, cutting through the subsoil (Plate 12). It is uncertain as to its date, but due to its good state of preservation and its position stratigraphically above the subsoil, it is suggested that it is relatively recent in date. Due to possible biological hazards inherent with such recent animal remains, it was not excavated.

5.2 Artefact analysis, by C. Jane Evans

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1-3.

5.2.1 Quantification

Finds came from seven of the trenches excavated and from eleven contexts, mainly associated with the topsoil. Much of the pottery was fragmentary and abraded, which sometimes made precise identification difficult. Where finds could be dated they provided evidence for low levels of prehistoric, late Iron Age to Roman, and post-medieval to modern activity (see Table 1).

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)
prehistoric	stone	flint	flakes	2	2.2
Iron Age/Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	2	60
Roman	ceramic	earthenware	oven plate?	1	105
Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	3
post-medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	2	19
post-medieval	ceramic	fired clay	clay pipe	1	9
post-medieval/modern	glass	pale green	droplet	1	4
modern	ceramic	earthenware	kiln furniture	1	5
modern	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	13
undated	bone	animal bone	fragment	3	78
undated	ceramic	fired clay	brick/tile	1	17
undated	ceramic	fired clay	fragment	10	15
undated	stone	flint	fragment	1	17.4

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

period	fabric code	fabric common name	count	weight(g)	average weight(g)
Iron Age/Roman	3	Malvernian ware	2	60	30
Roman	3.1?	Slab-built Malvernian ware?	1	105	105
Roman	13	Sandy oxidized ware	1	3	3
Post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red ware	2	19	10
Modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	13	13
total			7	200	29

Table 2 Quantification of the pottery by fabric

5.2.2 Summary artefactual evidence by period

For the finds from individual features, including specific types of pottery, consult Tables 3 and 2 in that order and in combination.

Prehistoric

The only evidence for definitively prehistoric activity came from the fill of a possible hearth in Trench 8 (804, fill 803) which produced two burnt, struck flakes of flint. Neither was sufficiently diagnostic to provide closer dating (Rob Hedge pers comm). Another flint fragment was recovered from the topsoil in Trench 14 (fill 1400), but this was most likely plough-struck rather than worked.

Iron Age/Roman

A small quantity of Roman material was present. A thick sherd in a Malvernian fabric was found in a pit in Trench 3. This might be from the base of a large storage jar or might be a fragment of oven plate. If the former, this could date from the Middle Iron Age to early Roman periods. If oven plate, these are most common in late 3rd to 4th century deposits but are known from 2nd century contexts as well. The same pit produced two joining base sherds from a handmade Malvernian jar. This could not be closely dated either; it could be later Iron Age or early Roman. Given the presence of other Roman material from this area of the site, albeit it very small quantities, a Roman date is perhaps more likely. Another, abraded sherd of probable Roman pottery came from the topsoil in Trench 11 (fill 1100).

Post-medieval and modern

The remaining finds were post-medieval, modern or undated. Single body sherds in brown glazed, post-medieval red ware were found in the topsoil of Trenches 5 and 13 (fills 500 and 1300 respectively). These date broadly to the 16th to 17th centuries. The only modern pottery was a sherd of stoneware found in the topsoil in Trench 8.

The topsoil in Trench 16 (fill 1600) produced a complete clay pipe bowl, with a poorly impressed, heart-shaped stamp on the heel. The form dates broadly to the mid-17th century (Oswald 1975, fig 3, G.5). The only other finds of any significance were a kiln spacer, possibly from the Worcester porcelain works, found in the topsoil of Trench 8 (fill 800) and a droplet of glass from the topsoil in Trench 11 (fill 1100). Debris from the porcelain works, such as saggar and spacer fragments, was commonly dumped on fields around the city, perhaps to improve drainage. The glass droplet must have been associated with some heat process and was perhaps dumped in the same way.

ontext	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)	period	start date	end date	tpq date range
304	ceramic	pot	2	60	Iron Age/ Roman			Iron Age/Roman
305	ceramic	oven plate	1	105	Roman	late 3rd	4th	late 3rd-4th
305	ceramic	fired clay	2	10	undated			
500	ceramic	pot	1	8	post-medieval	1500	1699	1500-1699
503	ceramic	fired clay	7	2	undated			undated
509	bone	animal bone	2	56	undated			medieval/ post-medieval
509	ceramic	brick/tile	1	17	medieval/post- medieval			
800	ceramic	kiln furniture	1	5	modern	1750	2000	1800-2000
800	ceramic	pot	1	13	modern	1800	1950	
803	stone	flint flakes	2	2.2	prehistoric			prehistoric
1100	glass	glass droplet	1	4	post-medieval/ modern			post-medieval/ modern
1100	ceramic	pot	1	3	Roman			Roman
1300	bone	animal bone	1	22	undated			1500-1699
1300	ceramic	pot	1	11	post-medieval	1500	1699	
1300	ceramic	fired clay	1	3	undated			
1400	stone	flint	1	17.4	undated			undated
1600	ceramic	clay pipe	1	9	post-medieval	1640	1660	1640-1660

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

5.2.3 Conclusions and recommendations

The finds provide evidence for low levels of activity either on site or in the vicinity in the prehistoric, late Iron Age and Roman, and post-medieval to modern periods.

No further analysis is required.

5.2.4 Discard and retention

The stamped clay pipe bowl may be worthy of retention (or the stamp photographed) but all other finds could be considered for discard, though the agreement of the receiving museum is required for any course of action.

5.3 Environmental analysis, by Elizabeth Pearson

The environmental evidence recovered is summarised in Tables 4-6.

Uncharred remains, consisting of mainly root fragments are assumed to be modern and intrusive as they are unlikely to have survived in the soils on site for long without charring or waterlogging.

context	sample	charcoal	charred plant	uncharred plant	artefacts
305	1	occ		abt*	occ burnt stone
803	3	occ		abt*	
1205	2	occ	occ	abt*	occ coal, clinker, plaster, burnt stone

Table 5: Summary of environmental remains; occ = occasional, mod = moderate, abt = abundant, * = probably modern and intrusive

Preservation of environmental remains was poor in all three samples, consisting of small, unidentifiable fragments of charcoal. A single unidentifiable charred cereal grain in an undated possible hearth fill (1205) [1206] was the only example of food or agricultural debris.

Little interpretation can be made of these remains, which suggest limited potential for recovery of environmental evidence in the form of animal bone, charred cereal crop waste or waterlogged organic remains, should further fieldwork be undertaken on this site.

Few samples for environmental remains have been taken as a result of fieldwork in the Kempsey area, and where samples have been taken, for example at Old Road South, Kempsey (Goad, Pearson and Darch 2003) few identifiable remains have been recovered.

context	sample	preservation type	species detail	category remains	quantity/diversity
305	1	?wa*	<i>Fumaria</i> sp, <i>Ranunculus acris/repens/bulbosus</i> , <i>Chenopodium album</i> , <i>Atriplex</i> sp, <i>Galium aparine</i>	misc	+++/low
305	1	ch	unidentified wood fragments	misc	+/low
803	3	?wa*	unidentified herbaceous root fragments	misc	+++/low
803	3	?wa*	<i>Chenopodium album</i> , <i>Atriplex</i> sp, <i>Galium aparine</i>	seed	+/low
803	3	ch	unidentified wood fragments	misc	+/low
1205	2	ch	Cereal sp indet grain	grain	+/low
1205	2	?wa*	<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> , <i>Chenopodium album</i> , <i>Atriplex</i> sp, <i>Galium aparine</i> , <i>Sambucus nigra</i>	seed	+/low
1205	2	?wa*	unidentified herbaceous root fragments	misc	+++/low
1205	2	ch	unidentified wood fragments	misc	+/low

Table 6: Plant remains from bulk samples

Key:

preservation	quantity
ch = charred	+ = 1 - 10
min = mineralised	++ = 11 - 50
wa = waterlogged	+++ = 51 - 100
?wa = waterlogged or uncharred	++++ = 101+
	* = probably modern and intrusive

6 Synthesis

The presence of a number of potential storage pits across the northern half of the site, in close proximity to a known enclosure of probable prehistoric date, suggests a likely contemporaneity. Recent work at Clifton Quarry c 1.5km to the south revealed a large Middle Iron Age landscape dedicated to grain processing and storage (Mann and Jackson forthcoming), including 678 postholes and 129 pits. Nearly half the pits were grouped into three distinct clusters. Such grouping could potentially be seen with the pits identified during these excavations. Certainly the north-eastern corner of the study site had the greatest density. One solitary posthole was identified, though its location near the edge of the trench does offer the possibility that it does not exist in isolation.

The pottery recovered from the pits could not be tightly dated, and could reasonably be from the later Iron Age or Roman periods. If it was Roman, it would more likely be from the 3rd or 4th centuries. The ditches remain undated, though one at least is likely to be medieval or later. The remaining linear features could represent a field system contemporary with the pits.

The undated hearth was likely to be early prehistoric in date, given the presence of flint flakes, and if so, it remains in isolation in regards to the dates of the other archaeological features.

The ditches, though all undated, can be interpreted to some extent. The three excavated sections that align are considered likely to be a medieval or post-medieval field boundary, though one that predates the mid-19th century. The remaining features may be contemporary with the storage pits, and themselves represent an aspect of an earlier field system.

7 Significance

7.1 Nature of the archaeological interest in the site

The archaeological remains identified on the site were mainly dated to either the later Iron Age or late Roman periods, and consisted of probable storage pits. Alongside these were a number of undated ditches, some of which were probably medieval or later in date, although this is somewhat conjectural. A solitary posthole was also identified, but due to the restrictions inherent in trial trenching, it could be part of a larger structure that extends beyond the limits of the trench in which it was found.

7.2 Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site

The proximity of these features to a known enclosure of probable prehistoric date helps to illuminate a possible Iron Age landscape, within the wider context of the later prehistory of the area.

7.3 Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site

Whilst the pits are concentrated mainly in the north-east corner of the site, such features can be easily missed by evaluation trenching, and therefore may extend further south and west, even into areas that have otherwise shown, by trial trenching, to be blank.

The archaeological features were buried beneath at least 0.50m of top and sub soils, sometimes extending up to 0.85m of overburden. The pits themselves were relatively shallow, often no greater than 0.30m in depth cut into the natural.

8 The impact of the development

8.1 Impacts during construction

The full scope of construction works has not been identified to WA, but any service trenching or building footings are likely to impact upon the archaeological remains, as are general site operations, such as movement of heavy plant across the area.

8.2 Impacts on sustainability

The historic environment is a non-renewable resource and therefore cannot be directly replaced. However mitigation through recording and investigation also produces an important research dividend that can be used for the better understanding of the area's history and contribute to local and regional research agendas (cf NPPF, DCLG 2012, section 141).

9 Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of land north of Pixham Ferry Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8499 4836). It was commissioned by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology, on behalf of Taylor Wimpey West Midlands.

Seventeen trenches were excavated across the site. A number of probable storage pits were identified, and a sample of them excavated. Whilst the pottery recovered from the features was of later Iron Age or Roman date, the proximity of a probable prehistoric enclosure some 200m to the west would suggest the former date.

The investigation also revealed a number of undated ditches. One of these is likely to relate to medieval or later land divisions; although one that predates the mid-19th century. The other ditches are likely to be older; possibly contemporary with the storage pits. An undated but probably early prehistoric possible hearth was also excavated. This lay in isolation from the other archaeological features identified.

10 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Jon Webster (Assistant Project Manager, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology) and Adrian Scruby (Historic Environment Planning Advisor, Worcestershire County Council).

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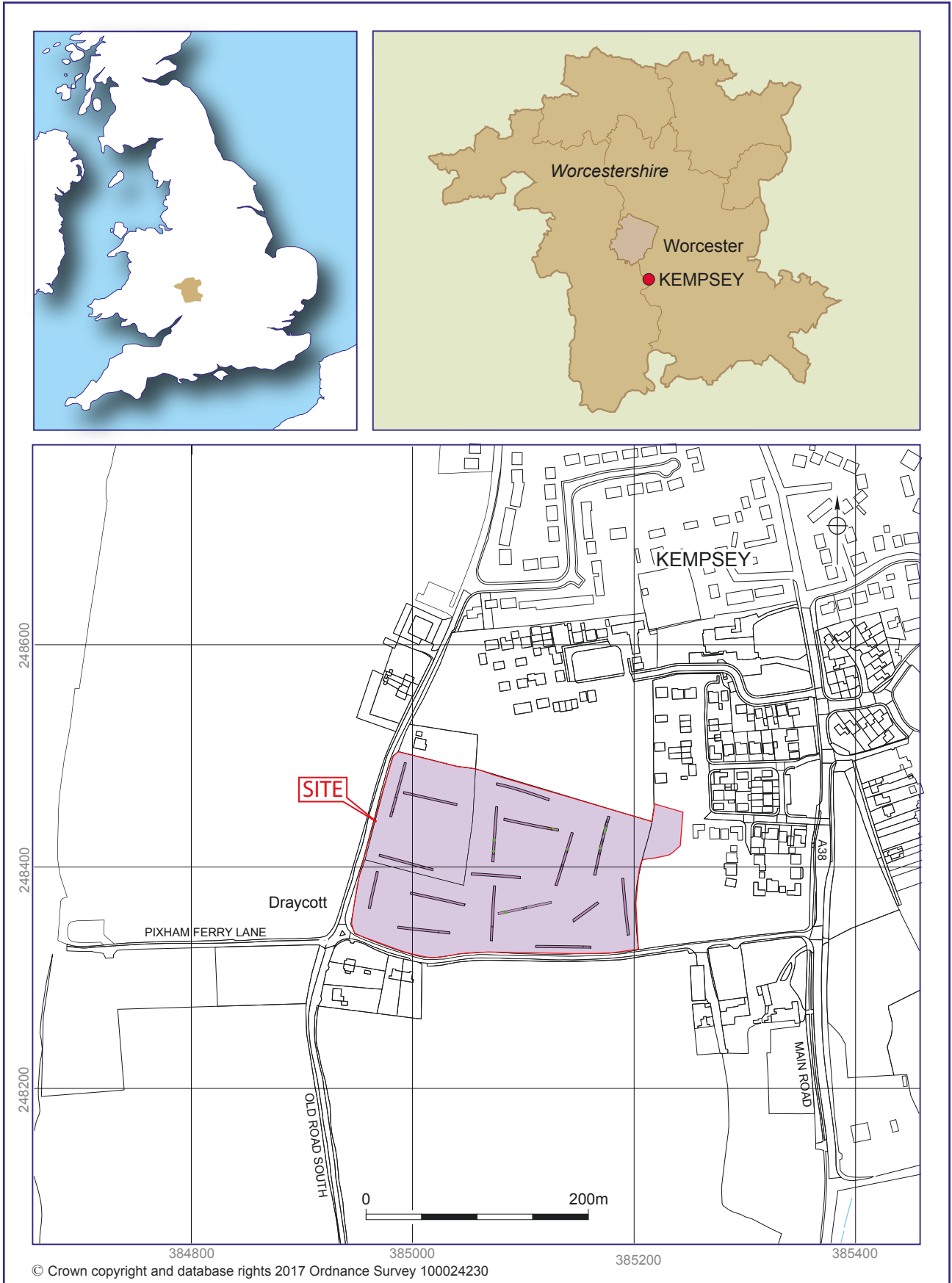
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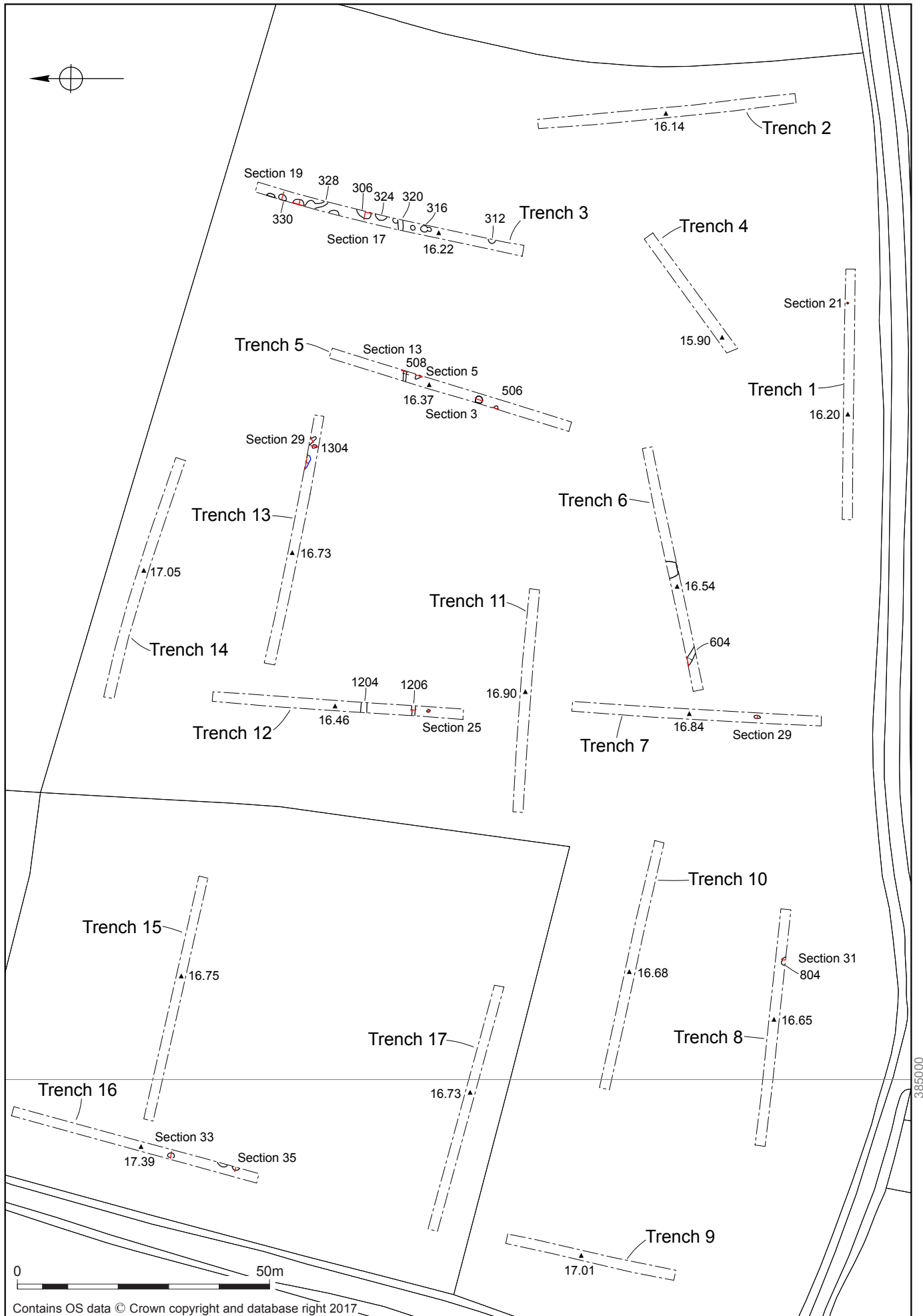
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Figures



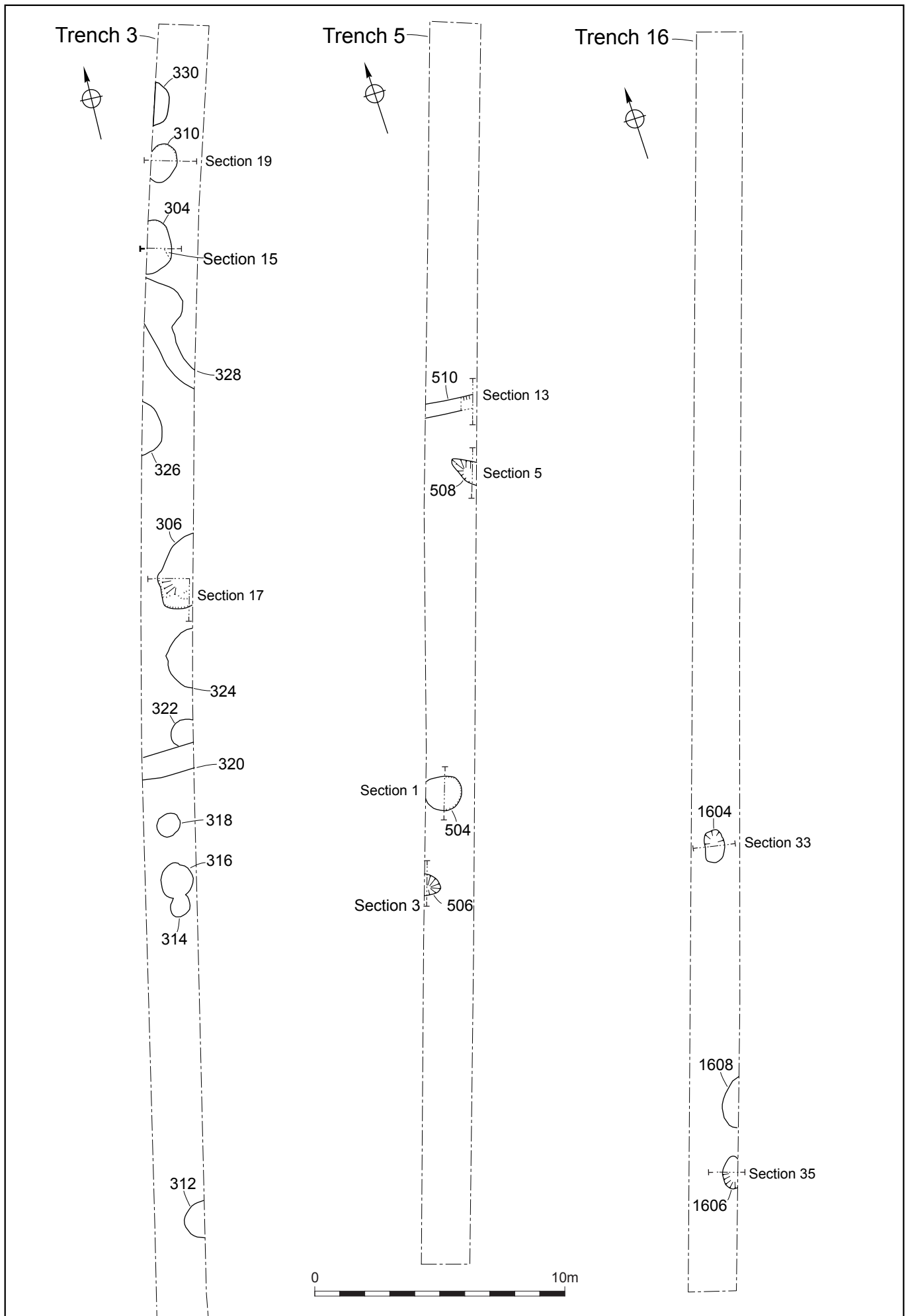
Location of the site

Figure 1



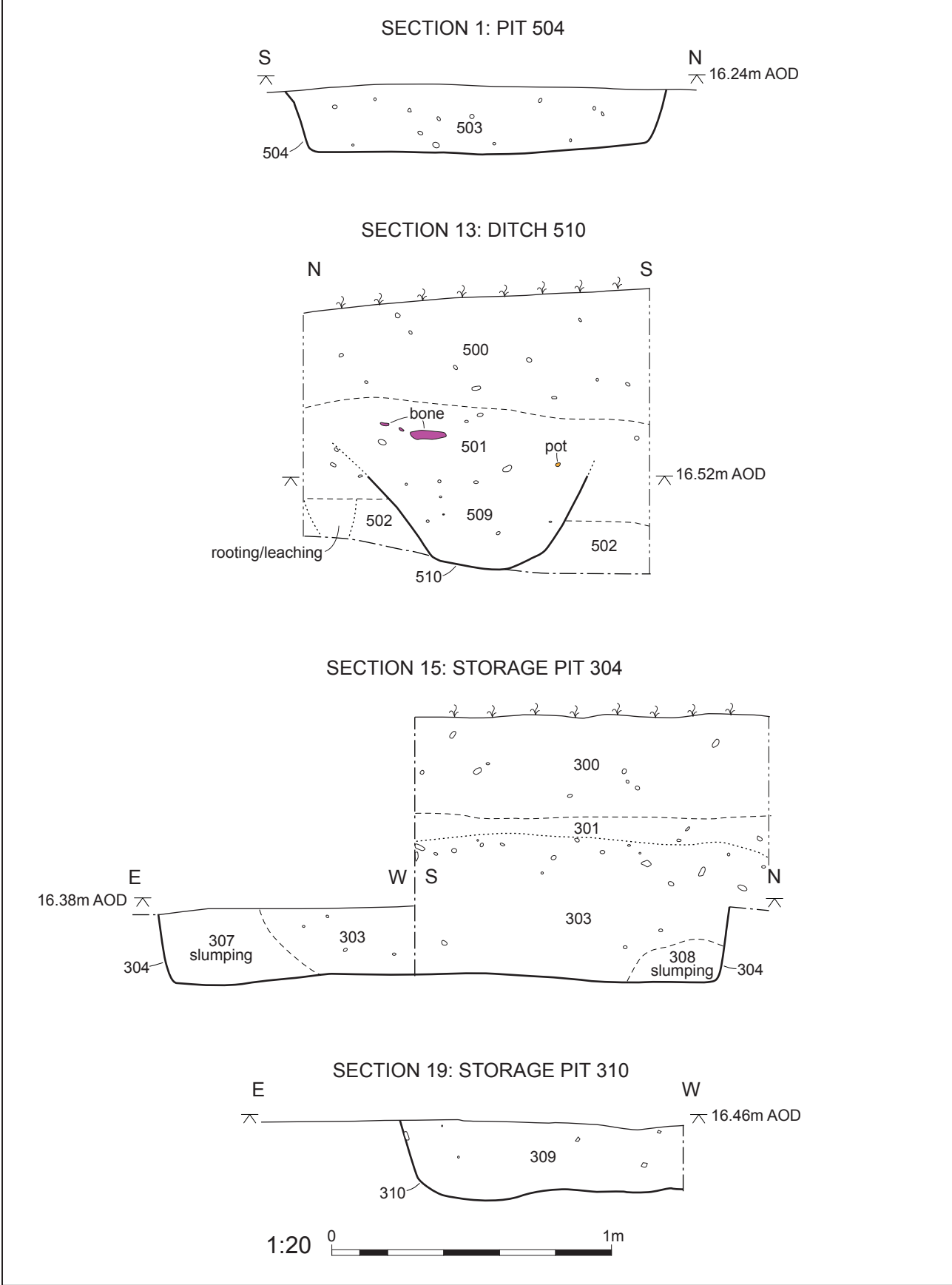
Trench locations and features

Figure 2



Trenches 3, 5 and 16: plans

Figure 3



Sections 1, 13, 15 and 19

Figure 4

Plates



Plate 1 General view of site, looking south-west



Plate 2 Trench 3, looking south (1m scales)



Plate 3 Pit 304, looking west (1m scales)



Plate 4 Pit 306, looking north (1m scale)



Plate 5 Pit 306, looking east (1m scales)



Plate 6 Pit 504, looking west (1m scale)



Plate 7 Pit 506, looking west (1m scale)



Plate 8 Trench 5, looking south (1m scales)



Plate 9 Pit 1306, looking west (0.5m scale)



Plate 10 Gully 1304, looking north-west (0.5m scale)



Plate 11 Pit 1604, looking north-west (0.5m scale)



Plate 12 Cattle bone in pit in Trench 6, looking north (1m scale)



Plate 13 Ditch 604, looking north (1m scale)



Plate 14 Pit 1204 (fully excavated), looking south-west (0.5m scale)



Plate 15 Posthole 104, looking west (0.5m scale)



Plate 16 Possible hearth, looking south (0.5m scale)

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
100		Layer	Topsoil	0.38m	mod compact mid reddish brown silty sand
101		Layer	Subsoil	0.2m	mod compact mid orange brown silty sand
102		Layer	Natural	0.56m bgs	firm mid pinky red sandy clay and pebbles
103		Fill	fill of posthole 104	0.16m x 0.26m x 0.34m	soft mid orange brown sand
104		Cut	posthole	0.16m x 0.26m x 0.34m	

Trench 2

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
200		Layer	Topsoil	0.37m thick	mod compact mid reddish brown silty sand
201		Layer	Subsoil	0.22m	mod compact mid orange brown silty sand
202		Layer	Natural	0.59m bgs	soft mid brownish orange and mid pinky grey sand and clay with pebbles

Trench 3

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
300		Layer	topsoil	D: 0.48m	friable light brownish grey sandy silt
301		Layer	subsoil	D: 0.20m	moderately compact light greyish orange sandy silt
302		Layer	natural	0.68m bgs	soft light pinky orange with red patches sand with patches of gravel
303		Fill	fill of pit [304]	D:	soft mid brown slightly silty

Land north of Pixham Ferry Lane, Kempsey, Worcestershire

			0.25m	sand
			W: 0.93m+	
304	Cut	cut of storage pit	D: 0.25m	
			W: 0.93m+	
305	Fill	Fill of large pit	depth: 0.44m width: 1.24m length: 2.84m	loose /soft light yellowish brown silty sand
306	Cut	Cut of large pit	see (305)	
307	Fill	Slumping against east side of pit [304]	D: 0.27m	soft mid brownish pink sand
			W:	
308	Fill	Slumping against north side of pit [304]	D: 0.16m	soft mid brownish pink sand
			W:	
309	Fill	fill of storage pit [310]	depth: 0.28m length: 1.56m width: 1m	soft/ loose mid orange brown silty sand
310	Cut	cut of storage pit	depth: 0.28m length: 1.56m width: unkno wn	
311	Fill	fill of pit [312]		
312	Cut	cut of unexcavated pit		
313	Fill	fill of pit [314]		
314	Cut	cut of unexcavated pit		
315	Fill	fill of pit [316]		
316	Cut	cut of unexcavated pit		
317	Fill	fill of pit [318]		
318	Cut	cut of unexcavated pit		
319	Fill	fill of ditch [320]		
320	Cut	cut of unexcavated ditch		
321	Fill	fill of pit [322]		
322	Cut	cut of unexcavated pit		

323	Fill	fill of pit [324]
324	Cut	cut of unexcavated pit
325	Fill	fill of pit [326]
326	Cut	cut of unexcavated pit
327	Fill	fill of ditch [328]
328	Cut	cut of an unexcavated ditch
329	Fill	fill of pit [330]
330	Cut	cut of unexcavated pit

Trench 4

Length: 25m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
400		Layer	topsoil	0.42m depth	mod compact mod greyish brown clay sand
401		Layer	subsoil	0.39m depth	soft mod yellowish brown silty sand
402		Layer	natural	depth unkno wn total trench depth= 0.87m	loose dark pinkie brown sand\ grit

Trench 5

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
500		Layer	topsoil	D: 0.40m	Friable Mid brownish grey Silty sand
501		Layer	subsoil	D: 0.2- 0.3m	Moderately compact Mid orangey brown
502		Layer	natural	0.7m bgs	Soft Pale pinkish brown with occasional red mottles Sand with occasional gravel patches
503		Fill	fill of pit [504]	Diameter: 1.40m Depth:	Friable Mid brown Silty
504	Pit	Cut	cut of storage pit	Diameter: 1.40m Depth:	
505		Fill	fill of [506]	Depth:	Friable Mid organgey brown

				c.0.5m ? Width: 0.86m	Gravelly sand
				Length: 0.56m	
506		Cut	cut of pit or terminus	Depth: c. 0.5m? Width: 0.86m	
				Length:	
507		Fill	fill of [508]	Depth: c.0.30 m? Width: 0.74m	Moderately compact Mid greyish brown Silty sand
				Length:	
508		Cut	cut of pit or terminus	Depth: c.0.30 m? Width: 0.74m	
				Length:	
509	Ditch	Fill	fill of ditch [510]	D: 0.20m+	Friable Mid orangey brown Silty sand
				W: 0.52m	
510	Ditch	Cut	cut of ditch	D: 0.20m+	
				W: 0.52m	

Trench 6

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
600		Layer	topsoil	0.35m	mod compact mid reddish brown silty sand
601		Layer	subsoil	0.24m	mod compact mid yellow brown silty sand
602		Layer	natural	0.54m bgs	soft mid orange red sand and gravels
603		Fill	fill of ditch 604	0.21m t x 1.2m w x	soft mid grey brown silty sand

			1.28m l	
604	Cut	nw-se ditch	0.21m t x 1.2m w x 1.28m l	
605	Fill	fill of cow burial	0.4m x 1.8m x 3m	soft mid yellow brown silty sand
606	Cut	pit for cow burial	0.4m x 1.8m x 3m	

Trench 7

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
700	Layer		topsoil	0.36m	mod compact mid reddish brown silty clay
701	Layer		subsoil	0.32m	mod compact mid yellow brown silty sand
702	Layer		natural	0.65m bgs	soft mid reddish yellow sand with red clay swathes
703	Fill		fill of pit 704	0.16m x 0.52m x 1.2m	soft mid reddish brown silty sand
704	Cut		pit cut	0.16m x 0.52m x 1.2m	

Trench 8

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
800	Layer		topsoil	0.32m	mod compact mid reddish brown silty sand
801	Layer		subsoil	0.38m	mod compact mid yellow brown silty sand
802	Layer		natural	0.69m bgs	firm mid reddish pink sandy clay with gravels
803	Fill		fill of possible hearth 804	0.08m x 0.6m x 1.4m	firm mid yellow brown silty sand
804	Cut		possible hearth cut	0.08m x 0.6m x 1.4m	

Trench 9

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
900		Layer	topsoil	Depth: 0.46m	moderately compact mid brownish grey sandy silt
901		Layer	subsoil	Depth: 0.24m	compact mid greyish yellow sandy silt
902		Layer	natural	0.7m bgs	soft light pinky orange with mid red patches sand with gravel patches

Trench 10

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
1000		Layer	topsoil	Depth: 0.44m	friable mid brownish grey sandy silt
1001		Layer	subsoil	Depth: 0.18m	moderately compact mid greyish yellow sandy silt
1002		Layer	natural	0.62m bgs	soft light pinkish orange with red patches sand with gravel patches

Trench 11

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: East to west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
1100		Layer	topsoil	depth: 0.29m	compact mid yellowish brown sandy silt
1101		Layer	subsoil	depth: 0.24	mod compact light yellowish brown silty sand
1102		Layer	natural	0.53m bgs	soft mid pinkie orange silty sand

Trench 12

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
1200		Layer	topsoil	depth:0 .39m	mod compact dark yellowish brown sandy silt
1201		Layer	subsoil	depth: 0.33m	compact light yellowish brown silty sand

1202	Layer	natural	0.72m bgs	soft Mid orange yellow sand
1203	Fill	fill of pit [1204]	depth: 0.31m width: 0.42m length: 0.72m	soft mid pinkie brown sand
1204	Cut	cut of small pit	see (1203)	
1205	Layer	fill of linear ditch [1206]	depth: 0.16m width: 0.69 length: 1.80m	soft mid greyish brown sandy silt
1206	Cut	cut of linear ditch	see (1205)	
1207	Fill	fill of linear ditch	length: 1.80	mod compact mid yellowish brown silty sand
1208	Cut	cut of linear ditch	length: 1.80 width:0 .98m	

Trench 13

Length: 50m

Width: 1.8m

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
1300	Layer		topsoil	0.39m	mod compact mid yellowish brown sandy silt
1301	Layer		subsoil	0.35m	soft light yellowish brown silty sand
1302	Layer		natural	0.74m bgs	loose dark pinkie brown silty sand
1303	Fill		fill of gully/pit	depth: 0.19m width: 1.28m length: 0.66m full extent unkno wn figures represe nt in trench	compact mid yellowish brown silty sand
1304	Cut		cut of pit or gully	same as 1303	
1305	Fill		fill of pit	depth:	soft mid organie brown silty

			0.25m width: 0.75m length: 0.90m	sand
1306	Cut	cut of pit	same as 1305	
1307	Fill	fill pf tree bowl?	depth: 0.24m length: 2.68m width: 0.74m	soft mid yellowish brown silty sand
1308	Cut	cut of tree bowl pr circular gully	see 1307	

Trench 14

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
1400	Layer		topsoil	depth: 0.32m	compact mid greyish brown sandy silt
1401	Layer		subsoil	0.33m	compact mid yellowish brown sandy silt
1402	Layer		natural	0.65m bgs	soft/loose dark pinkie brown silty sand

Trench 15

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
1500	Layer		topsoil	0.33m	mod compact mid reddish brown silty sand
1501	Layer		subsoil	0.2m	mod compact mid yellow brown silty sand
1502	Layer		natural	0.53m bgs	soft mid orange red sands and gravels with pinky clay bands

Trench 16

Length: 50m Width: 1.8m Orientation: North to south

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
1600	Layer		topsoil	0.39m	mod compact mid reddish brown silty sand
1601	Layer		subsoil	0.3m	mod compact mid yellow brown silty sand
1602	Layer		natural	0.69m	soft mid orange yellow sand

1603	Fill	fill of pit 1604	bgs 0.24m x 0.8m x 1.24m	with pinky clay bands soft mid reddish brown silty sand
1604	Cut	oval pit	0.24m x 0.8m x 1.24m	
1605	Fill	fill of pit 1606	0.38m d x 0.58m w x 1.5m l	soft mid reddish brown silty sand
1606	Cut	circular pit	0.38m d x 0.58m w x 1.5m l	
1607	Fill	fill of pit 1608	2m w x 0.6m l	soft mid reddish brown silty sand
1608	Cut	unexcavated circular pit	2m w x 0.6m l	

Trench 17

Length: 50m

Width: 1.8m

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Context summary:

Context	Feature type	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Deposit description
1700	Layer		topsoil	0.47m	mod compact mid reddish brown silty sand
1701	Layer		subsoil	0.24m	mod compact mid yellowish brown silty sand
1702	Layer		natural	0.7m bgs	soft mid orange yellow sand with pinky clay bands

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 68105)

The archive consists of:

- 2 Field progress reports AS2
- 121 Digital photographs
- 7 Scale drawings
- 1 Box of finds
- 1 CD-Rom/DVDs
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Museums Worcestershire
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

Summary of data for Worcestershire HER

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)
prehistoric	stone	flint	flakes	2	2.2
Iron Age/Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	2	60
Roman	ceramic	earthenware	oven plate?	1	105
Roman	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	3
post-medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	2	19
post-medieval	ceramic	fired clay	clay pipe	1	9
post-medieval/modern	glass	pale green	droplet	1	4
modern	ceramic	earthenware	kiln furniture	1	5
modern	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	13
undated	bone	animal bone	fragment	3	78
undated	ceramic	fired clay	brick/tile	1	17
undated	ceramic	fired clay	fragment	10	15
undated	stone	flint	fragment	1	17.4

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

period	fabric code	fabric common name	count	weight(g)	average weight(g)
Iron Age/Roman	3	Malvernian ware	2	60	30
Roman	3.1?	Slab-built Malvernian ware?	1	105	105
Roman	13	Sandy oxidized ware	1	3	3
Post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red ware	2	19	10
Modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	1	13	13
total			7	200	29

Table 2 Quantification of the pottery by fabric

ontext	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)	period	start date	end date	tpq date range
304	ceramic	pot	2	60	Iron Age/ Roman			Iron Age/Roman
305	ceramic	oven plate	1	105	Roman	late 3rd	4th	late 3rd-4th
305	ceramic	fired clay	2	10	undated			
500	ceramic	pot	1	8	post-medieval	1500	1699	1500-1699
503	ceramic	fired clay	7	2	undated			undated
509	bone	animal bone	2	56	undated			medieval/ post-medieval
509	ceramic	brick/tile	1	17	medieval/post-medieval			
800	ceramic	kiln furniture	1	5	modern	1750	2000	1800-2000
800	ceramic	pot	1	13	modern	1800	1950	
803	stone	flint flakes	2	2.2	prehistoric			prehistoric
1100	glass	glass droplet	1	4	post-medieval/ modern			post-medieval/ modern
1100	ceramic	pot	1	3	Roman			Roman
1300	bone	animal bone	1	22	undated			1500-1699
1300	ceramic	pot	1	11	post-medieval	1500	1699	
1300	ceramic	fired clay	1	3	undated			
1400	stone	flint	1	17.4	undated			undated
1600	ceramic	clay pipe	1	9	post-medieval	1640	1660	1640-1660

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

context	sample	feature type	fill of	period	sample volume (L)	volume processed (L)	residue assessed	flot assessed
305	1	pit	306	Iron Age	10	10	Yes	Yes
1205	2	linear	1206	undated	10	10	Yes	Yes
803	3	hearth	804	undated	10	10	Yes	Yes

Table 4: List of bulk samples

context	sample	charcoal	charred plant	uncharred plant	artefacts
305	1	occ		abt*	occ burnt stone
803	3	occ		abt*	

1205	2	occ	occ	abt*	occ coal, clinker, plaster, burnt stone
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Table 5: Summary of environmental remains; occ = occasional, mod = moderate, abt = abundant, * = probably modern and intrusive

context	sample	preservation type	species detail	category remains	quantity/diversity
305	1	?wa*	<i>Fumaria</i> sp, <i>Ranunculus acris/repens/bulbosus</i> , <i>Chenopodium album</i> , <i>Atriplex</i> sp, <i>Galium aparine</i>	misc	+++/low
305	1	ch	unidentified wood fragments	misc	+/low
803	3	?wa*	unidentified herbaceous root fragments	misc	+++/low
803	3	?wa*	<i>Chenopodium album</i> , <i>Atriplex</i> sp, <i>Galium aparine</i>	seed	+/low
803	3	ch	unidentified wood fragments	misc	+/low
1205	2	ch	Cereal sp indet grain	grain	+/low
1205	2	?wa*	<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> , <i>Chenopodium album</i> , <i>Atriplex</i> sp, <i>Galium aparine</i> , <i>Sambucus nigra</i>	seed	+/low
1205	2	?wa*	unidentified herbaceous root fragments	misc	+++/low
1205	2	ch	unidentified wood fragments	misc	+/low

Table 6: Plant remains from bulk samples

Key:

preservation	quantity
ch = charred	+ = 1 - 10
min = mineralised	++ = 11- 50
wa = waterlogged	+++ = 51 - 100
?wa = waterlogged or uncharred	++++ = 101+
	* = probably modern and intrusive